

# **IASSIST**

## **QUARTERLY**

**Volume 7**

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## EDITORIAL INFORMATION

The IASSIST Newsletter represents an international cooperative effort on the part of individuals managing, operating, or using machine-readable data archives, data libraries, and data services. The Newsletter reports on activities related to the production, acquisition, preservation, processing, distribution, and use of machine-readable data carried out by its members and others in the international social science community. Your contributions and suggestions for topics of interest are welcomed. The views set forth by authors of articles contained in this publication are not necessarily those of IASSIST.

### INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

The Newsletter is published four times yearly. Articles and other information should be typewritten and double-spaced. Each page of the manuscript should be numbered. The first page should contain the article title, author's name, affiliation, address to which correspondence may be sent, and telephone number. Footnotes and bibliographic citations should be consistent in style, preferably following a standard authority such as the University of Chicago Press Manual of Style or Kate L. Turabian's Manual for Writers. If the contribution is an announcement of a conference, training session, or the like, the text should include a mailing address and a telephone number for the director of the event or for the organization sponsoring the event. Book notices and reviews should not exceed two double-spaced pages. Manuscripts should be sent in duplicate to the Editor:

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# I A S S I S T

## NEWSLETTER

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## REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

At the last IASSIST International Conference, May 27-30, 1983 the Administrative Committee began a new term of office. As President and Chairperson of the committee, I would like to provide all members with information on our activities and to mention some important issues now before the organization.

During the next few years it will be necessary for IASSIST to grow and to become a known professional association. There is a tremendous amount of expertise among the membership and it is vital that this expertise be shared with others. Some success has been achieved, particularly in the field of cataloging. More will be forthcoming as the association becomes stronger and more established.

The need for a revised constitution was recognized several years ago and a great deal of work has been done to enable the constitution to reflect the changes through which the association has gone and to provide a solid basis from which to grow. After considerable review and revision, it is hoped that the proposed constitution will be presented to the General Assembly at the Philadelphia meeting in May, of this year. I hope that all members will take the time to read and understand the changes being proposed. It is a vital issue for continued growth and stability of the association.

The changes to the IASSIST publication are the most visible signs of growth as an organization. It was felt that the term "Newsletter" no longer reflected the contents of the publication. Although it has not reached the stature of a full professional journal, it does provide detailed information and articles on topics of concern to those in the field. There was also concern that the title did not promote a wide readership. The new title IASSIST QUARTERLY more accurately reflects the content.

I hope that all members of IASSIST will feel free to make suggestions and to bring forward issues. Your participation and concern are vital to the growth of the association. I look forward to working with all of you.

*Sue Gavrel*  
President





# CALENDAR

April 13-15, 1983

Seattle, Washington

Census Bureau Training Course  
"1980 Census Computer Tape Files"

Contact: Dorothy Chin  
User Training Branch  
Data User Services Division  
Bureau of the Census  
Washington, D.C. 20233  
(301) 763-1510

May, 1983

Census Bureau Training Course  
"Microdata from the 1980 Census"

Contact: Dorothy Chin  
User Training Branch  
Data User Services Division  
Bureau of the Census  
Washington, D.C. 20233  
(301) 763-1510

Atlanta, Georgia - May 10  
Dallas, Texas - May 24  
San Francisco, California  
May 26

May 19-22, 1983

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

IASISST Annual Conference

Contact: Sue Dodd, Program Chair  
Institute for Research in  
Social Science  
Room 25, Manning Hall, 026A  
University of North Carolina  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514  
(919) 966-3346

June 10-12, 1983

New Brunswick, New Jersey

International Conference in Data Bases in  
the Humanities and Social Sciences

Contact: Professor Robert F. Allen  
Room 427  
Alexander Library  
Rutgers University  
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903  
U.S.A.



July 15-22, 1983

Oxford, United Kingdom

Annual Conference of the International Society  
for Political Psychology

Contact: Professor Betty Glad  
Department of Political Science  
University of Illinois at Urbana -  
Champaign  
361 Lincoln Hall  
702 South Wright Street  
Urbana, Illinois 61801-3696  
U.S.A.

August 11-14, 18-21, 1983

Toronto, Canada

International Time Series Meetings

Contact: O.D. Anderson  
9 Ingham Grove  
Lenton Gardens  
Nottingham NG7 2LQ  
ENGLAND

August 15-18, 1983

Annual Meeting: American Statistical Association

August 22-24, 1983

Washington, D.C.

1983 Public Health Conference on Records and  
Statistics

Contact: Gail F. Fisher, Ph.D.  
Room 2-28 Center Building  
3700 East-West Highway  
Hyattsville, Maryland 20782

August 28 - September 2, 1983

Győr, Hungary

International Peace Research Association  
10th General Conference

Contact: IPRA Secretariat  
Faculty of Law  
University of Tokyo  
Bunkyo, Tokyo  
113 JAPAN



September 5-9, 1983

Madrid, Spain

International Economic Association  
7th World Congress

Contact: IEA Secretary General  
Professor L. Fauvel  
23 rue Campagne Première  
75014 Paris  
FRANCE

September 25-30, 1983

Vienna, Austria

International Society for Criminology  
9th International Congress  
"Relationship between criminology and public  
policy"

Contact: INTERCONVENTION  
c/o Mrs. I. Hollensteiner  
P.O. Box 80  
A-1107, Vienna  
AUSTRIA

October 16-23, 1983

Stockholm, Sweden

Training Course in Accessibility and Dissemination  
of Non-Bibliographic Data in Science and Technology

Contact: Dr. S. Schwarz, Director  
Royal Institute of Technology Library  
S-100 44 Stockholm  
SWEDEN



# NETWORK MANAGEMENT OF MACHINE-READABLE DATA FILE RECORDS

BY

Marilyn Nasatir  
Dublin, Ohio

Users of machine-readable data files (MRDF) bear the responsibility to share information about data files as well as to share access to data files. Anyone needing a particular data file would find it useful to be able to sit down at a terminal and call up a record of that file by author or title or a variety of control numbers, find out where that data file is and at the same time find out how to access the file, wherever it happens to be. This presumes that someone has entered that record into the database in order to be able to retrieve it.

The bibliographic networks such as OCLC (Online Computer Library Center), RLIN (Research Libraries Information Network), WLN (Washington Library Network), UTLAS (University of Toronto Library Automated Systems) and NOTIS (Northwestern Online Total Information System) provide a mechanism for participants to share information resources while the networks take care of storing, maintaining and managing machine-readable records of them. At present, these records are bibliographic descriptions of books, serials, audiovisual media, maps, manuscripts, music scores, and sound recordings, making each item not only uniquely identifiable but also locatable for loan or purchase by means of institutional holdings symbols. At least one bibliographic network--OCLC--will be incorporating records of MRDF into its bibliographic database to facilitate utilization of machine-readable data.

The two primary considerations in this important system enhancement are 1) the applicability of existing standards for describing and accessing MRDF records and 2) the feasibility of integrating MRDF records with records of the traditional information sources which comprise a bibliographic network database.

## STANDARDS FOR DESCRIBING AND ACCESSING MRDF

The need for standards to enable libraries, archives, and other information based agencies to cooperate in the description and access of machine-readable data files already being collected by academic and other institutions was demonstrated over a decade ago when the Descriptive Cataloging Committee of ALA's Cataloging and Classification Section established the Subcommittee on Rules for MRDF. Over a period of years the Subcommittee drafted position papers making recommendations on cataloging MRDF which became the basis of chapter nine ("Machine-Readable Data Files") of the second edition of Anglo-American Cataloging Rules (AACR2).<sup>1</sup> AACR2 attempts to integrate cataloging of MRDF with all other types of materials.

The Subcommittee's recommendations supplemented by recommendations made by the Joint Steering Committee of AACR2 were followed in 1978 by the National Conference on Cataloging and Information Services for MRDF, organized to develop standards for





bibliographic control of MRDF. Two of the recommendations of the Conference were 1) the design of a MARC (Machine-Readable Cataloging) format for MRDF and 2) the definition of products and services to be derived from cataloging MRDF.<sup>2</sup>

In response to the first Conference recommendation, the Network Development Office of the Library of Congress (LC) produced Machine-Readable Data Files: A MARC Format (MRDF/MARC).<sup>3</sup> The US/MARC Formats are standards for representing bibliographic and authority information in machine-readable form. An individual MARC format is a set of conventions for encoding a particular type of machine-readable record. The structure of a US/MARC record is determined by the American National Standard for Information Interchange on Magnetic Tape (ANSI Z39.2 - 1979) and by Documentation - Format for Bibliographic Information Interchange on Magnetic Tape (ISO 2709 - 1973). The content of certain data elements in a MARC record is specified by the US/MARC Formats, while the content of traditional catalog elements is defined by other guidelines such as AACR2.<sup>4</sup>

In response to the second recommendation, the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan has created an automated cataloging system for MRDF from which such products as the guide to ICPSR's resources, facsimiles of catalog cards, bibliographic citations, indexes, and authority lists of authors and titles will be derived.<sup>5</sup> The system is still in the development stage and is not yet available to the public.

Other agencies have also derived products and services from cataloging MRDF. At the federal level, standards were developed for bibliographic citations and abstracts in the production of directories of MRDF. Two examples of applications of these standards are the Directory of Data Files issued by the Bureau of the Census and American National Standard for Computer Program Abstracts (ANSI X3.88 - 1981).

The existence of standards thus demonstrated, the question of applicability must be addressed. In the intervening years since the adoption of AACR2, microcomputer and video game software have emerged which were not considered either in AACR2 or in MRDF/MARC. It seems more appropriate to extend the definition of MRDF to include microcomputer software than to violate input standards of the bibliographic networks by forcing these materials indiscriminately (and unretrievably) into the network formats for books or audiovisual media which were not constructed to handle them. Therefore, since input standards are rule-driven, catalogers and policy makers have been meeting to propose solutions to the problem of rules for physical description of microcomputer software. A special cataloging task force has been formed with the charge to develop a statement regarding microcomputer software description, to be published in LC's Cataloging Service Bulletin and to constitute national policy until AACR2 can be revised. This policy will be reflected in modifications to MRDF/MARC.

For assistance in the description of MRDF, catalogers and data librarians will have at their disposal Sue Dodd's new Cataloging Machine-Readable Data Files: An Interpretive Manual<sup>6</sup> as well as a manual of microcomputer software cataloging examples which is expected to be published by the Minnesota AACR2 Training Series.



## INTEGRATING A MRDF FORMAT INTO A BIBLIOGRAPHIC NETWORK

The feasibility of integrating MRDF records into the database of a bibliographic network, which in network terminology is called implementing a MRDF format, is dependent upon 1) the existence of data elements in a bibliographic record which are appropriate to MRDF users, 2) network systems and services already in place which meet the needs of MRDF users, 3) products which can be generated from these systems and services, and 4) a viable mechanism for extending treatment of traditional information sources to new formats.

### Data Elements

Data elements present in a network bibliographic record needed by MRDF users are as follows: a data file description showing existence and source of data; a detailed abstract which includes the genesis and history of the file so as to link modified files; a keyword structure; links between data files and the software created to manage or operate them, including the presence and bibliographic citation of accompanying documentation, software compatibility, and linkage with other files or programs; and the applicability of the data to solving specific problems or analytic needs.

Dodd has grouped these data elements for MRDF into six categories, or levels. Level 1, Bibliographic Identity, includes such bibliographic elements as author, title, edition, distributor, notes, etc. Level 2, Data Abstract, is a descriptive summary, abstract, or subject analysis of the contents of the file. Level 3, Classification, provides the classification codes, indexing, or descriptors. Level 4, Technical Information for Access, spells out the physical characteristics needed to access the MRDF such as recording density or software compatibility. Level 5, Analysis or Use, gives a citation of documentation and related reports as well as such data collection information as how/when the data were collected, the unit of analysis, and sampling procedures. Finally, Level 6, Archiving or Maintaining, indicates records on processing, storage, use, and modifications to the MRDF.<sup>7</sup> While this may sound like more information than could be incorporated into a single record, a bibliographic record currently provided by OCLC, and presumably by the other networks, can accommodate over 4000 characters, considerably in excess of the approximately 2500 required, according to Dodd, for an expanded bibliographic MRDF record.

### Systems and Services

The data elements just discussed, along with numerous others, form the basis of the systems and services already offered in different combinations by the bibliographic networks for managing, with appropriate variations, records of books, serials, audiovisual media, maps, manuscripts, music scores and sound recordings. Prominent among these systems and services are online union catalogs; shared cataloging; serials control; subject retrieval; patron access; interlibrary loan (ILL); authority control, services for converting existing bibliographic and location data into machine-readable form and adding them to the online union catalog; and acquisitions, ordering, and fund accounting which currently interface with a directory of libraries, publishers and vendors, soon to interface directly with the vendors themselves, and easily extendable to producers and distributors of MRDF. This powerful combination of



services will provide MRDF users with a systematic way of identifying and locating MRDF in-house control as well as for acquiring and accessing MRDF from external sources.

Additional services not to be overlooked are the training programs, workshops, and materials provided both by the instructional coordinators of the bibliographic networks themselves and by the independent contracting network offices through which most institutions participate. It is interesting to note that the independent networks that contract with OCLC to provide services to their member libraries are already getting requests for the MRDF format from a variety of sources. Government and research institutions are of course spurred on by the 1980 Census. Data archives are underutilized and eager to add their holdings to the OCLC database. "Silicon Valley" type organizations have a wide range of MRDF to control. Academic and public libraries, schools, and media centers, stimulated by the microcomputer craze, are asking to use OCLC for cataloging, ILL (especially for documentation), acquisitions, and collection development in the lively area of microcomputer software, games, and instructional materials as well as MRDF. In fact, DIALOG (available through OCLC's Affiliated Online Services) is adding the INTERNATIONAL SOFTWARE DIRECTORY and the MICROCOMPUTER INDEX to its long list of databases.

## Products

A MRDF record unambiguously tagged in an online union catalog can serve as an organic record from which catalog cards, accessions lists, and institution-specific archive tapes can be generated just as they are for other types of materials. The potential exists for such additional products as union lists, bibliographic citations, catalog entries, data abstracts, card or tape distribution of MRDF records, and subject access either printed or on microform.<sup>8</sup>

## Implementation of a MRDF Format

Although all of the bibliographic networks have the capability of implementing new formats in response to and support of LC policy and precedent, and despite Mary Magrega's paper describing the areas of activity which would be involved at UTLAS in implementing a MRDF format<sup>9</sup>, OCLC is the only bibliographic network which has actually made a commitment to implement a MRDF format and is already involved in the analysis phase.

Analysis is the first of five stages of an OCLC Cataloging Maintenance Project, the developmental process decided upon as the most viable mechanism for expediting the MRDF implementation for two reasons. One is staff and resource allocation. The other is that MRDF/MARC will be distributed by LC as an Update to its MARC Formats for Bibliographic Data (MFBD) on which many Cataloging Maintenance changes are based.<sup>10</sup> The product of the analysis phase will be functional specifications written by a library systems analyst serving as Product Manager of a team of highly skilled catalogers, programmers, technical writers, quality control and testing staff.

The functional specifications will provide the basis for the four remaining stages of the Cataloging Maintenance process: development of software, preparation of user documentation, creation of scenarios for testing the changes, and finally installation of online system and related offline production changes. One of the



benefits of installing the MRDF format as a Cataloging Maintenance Project is that subsequent modifications distributed by LC through MRBD Updates will be easily accommodated.

### CONCLUSION

A major goal of integrating MRDF into traditional library and information services by incorporating MRDF records into a bibliographic network is to communicate the availability of machine-readable materials and facilitate their utilization. It has been shown that existing standards for the description and access of MRDF, with minor modifications already in progress, are adequate for the bibliographic control of a wide range of machine-readable materials currently being collected. It has also been shown that data element descriptions, bibliographic network systems, services, and products, and a network mechanism for implementing new formats all are firmly established and easily applicable to MRDF ensuring the feasibility of the management of MRDF records by the bibliographic networks. What remains to be demonstrated is the MRDF users will avail themselves of this developing capability by contributing and accessing MRDF records by means of the various systems, services and products discussed. The vast numbers of inquiries already received suggest that they will. It is anticipated that this will be a cooperative venture in which the time and money spent by every user will be compensated for by benefits far outweighing the costs.

### REFERENCES

1. American Library Association. Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2d ed. Chicago: ALA, 1978.
2. Sue A. Dodd. "Toward Integration of Catalog Records on Social Science Machine-Readable Data Files Into Existing Bibliographic Utilities: A Commentary." Library Trends 30, n.3 (Winter 1982): 342.
3. Sue A. Dodd. Working Manual for Cataloging Machine-Readable Data Files (Chapel Hill: Social Science Data Library, University of North Carolina, 1976, mimeo).
4. "The US/MARC Formats: Underlying Principles." Library of Congress Information Bulletin (in press).
5. Carolyn Geda of ICPSR, private communication.
6. Sue A. Dodd. Cataloging Machine Readable Data Files: An Interpretive Manual.
7. Dodd, "Toward Integration," pp. 350-351.
8. Marilyn Nasatir. "Machine-Readable Data Files and Networks." Information Technology and Libraries (in press).





9. Mary K. Magrega. "A Bibliographic Utility's Implementation of the MARC Format for Machine-Readable Data Files." (Toronto: University of Toronto Library Automated Systems, 1981, mimeo).
10. United States. Library of Congress. Automated Systems Office. MARC Formats for Bibliographic Data. Washington: Library of Congress, 1980.

## ICDBHSS/83

### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DATA BASES IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The ICDBHSS/83 will be held in Rutgers, the State University, on the Douglas College campus, at New Brunswick, New Jersey, from June 10 to 12. It is intended that the conference be broad in scope and that there be a true exchange of ideas and information, not only between the social sciences and the humanities, but also between the various fields in each area.

Speakers from twenty-four countries will present papers concerning data bases, their structure, accessibility, and uses in the fields of archaeology, art, artificial intelligence, criminology, education, history, law, lexicology, linguistics, literature, music, philosophy, sociology, and religion, to mention only the broader areas. Most of the fields just mentioned extend over to other fields, e.g., art-history, socio-history, music-library, literary-linguistics.

The language of the conference will be English.

For additional information contact: Dr. Robert Allen  
Bishop House, Room 306A  
Rutgers University  
New Brunswick, N.J. 08903  
(201) 932-7335 or (201) 932-7505

## INDEX OF PUBLIC OPINION POLL QUESTIONS COMPILED

Dennis Gilbert at the University of Louisville is compiling the AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION INDEX, which will provide a topical listing of all questions asked in American public opinion polls, some information about where to get the results of the survey, and some information about the survey in which the questions were asked. The first volume will include questions asked in 1981. The second volume will cover 1982. By going beyond abstracts of polls to question level indexing, Gilbert hopes to provide researchers with the kind of detail they need to directly access the particular topic in which they are interested. Like any other index, APDI will not give researchers substantive information, but instead will tell where to find it. Consequently, polling agencies will retain control over their findings, especially those not yet published.

For further information, write to Dennis Gilbert, 501 Highwood Dr., Louisville, KY 40206 or call (502) 893-2527.



## INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE DATA ARCHIVE FORMED

THIS REPORT EXCEPTED FROM A FULLER VERSION PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE COUNCIL, UNESCO, PARIS: DECEMBER 1982, NO. 23.

The International Political Science Association (IPSA) held a workshop on the use of computerized data to compare leadership, participation and local government performance to meet social needs, on June 18-23, 1982. The forty participants used data from the University of Hawaii, Stein Rokan International Comparative Archive. (This is the probable name of the new archive.) The data cover four areas of research: 1) attributes, perceptions, values and behavior of local leaders; 2) civil activity of local citizens and voluntary organizations; 3) policy outputs of local authorities and achievement to meet community needs; 4) social structure, decisional processes, and ecological characteristics of local communities. The data from 50 surveys in ten countries were contributed to the archive before the workshop so that SPSS files could be created and variables could be retrieved that were identified as conceptually equivalent for two or more countries. This processing continues. The University of Hawaii will be a repository for new additions of the data, and will be responsible for cleaning, organizing and classifying data and for servicing requests for data. This will be achieved in part by the work of an International Coordination Committee, Jerzy Wiatr (Poland), chair, and Ulf Christofferson (Sweden) will act as international archivist responsible for locating, and entering new data.

For further information write to: Phil Jacob or Richard Chadwick, University of Hawaii, Division of Social Science, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.

### NCHS ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR PAPERS

"Priorities in Health Statistics" is the theme for the 1983 Public Health Conference on Records and Statistics. The focus will be on three areas which have primary need for health information and statistics--health promotion and disease prevention, moderating health care costs, and monitoring and evaluating health care programs.

The plenary session for each day will provide an overview of issues, problems, and goals for one of the three areas. Concurrent sessions will then examine that topic from the viewpoint of statistical program administration, methodology, and data use and analysis.

In addition to invited papers, contributed papers will be accepted for all but the plenary sessions. Acceptable papers must relate to the theme of the conference and to one of the specific topics. Authors should indicate which of the discussion areas their paper is appropriate for.

Contributors should send abstracts of not more than 300 words to Gail F. Fisher, Ph.D., Room 2-28 Center Building, 3700 East-West Highway, Hyattsville, Maryland 20782 by February 21, 1983. Those selected for presentation will be notified by April 15 and given technical requirements for submission of final drafts, which will be required prior to the meeting. Those not selected for presentation may submit copies of their papers for a literature display table.



Although the National Center for Health Statistics cannot pay an honorarium to authors of either Invited or contributed papers, it will pay travel and per diem expenses for one speaker per paper.

The conference will be in Washington, D.C., August 22-24. It will provide a forum for representatives from industry, Federal and State agencies, professional associations, and academia to exchange information and discuss the health statistics requirements of the 1980's.



## ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

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